

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-TEXARKANA



ASSESSMENT PLAN: GENERAL EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

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7101 UNIVERSITY AVENUE
TEXARKANA, TX 75503

ASSESSMENT PLAN

GENERAL EDUCATION / CORE CURRICULUM

OVERVIEW

Texas statute (TEC §§61.821-61.831) requires that each public institution of higher education establish and incorporate a 42 semester credit hour (SCH) general education (core curriculum) within the course requirements for all undergraduate degree programs. Core curriculum is defined as the knowledge in liberal arts, humanities, natural sciences, and behavioral sciences that all higher education undergraduate students should acquire, regardless of the degree sought. The six core component areas and related Exemplary Educational Objectives (EEOs) are provided on the THECB website at www.thecb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectid=7ED36862-993C-10F2-C64CA9C9EDF26C4C. (See *Appendix A* for the core curriculum adopted by Texas A&M University-Texarkana in 2009).

Assessment of the core curriculum is mandated by the State of Texas. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) requires that each institution evaluate the core curriculum every ten years and submit a report to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and The Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) Board of Regents (BOR) that includes “(1) a table that compares the institution’s core curriculum with the core component areas and exemplary educational objectives of the core curriculum recommended by the Board; (2) a brief description of the purpose and substance of the institution’s core curriculum; (3) a description of the processes and procedures used to evaluate the institution’s core curriculum; and (4) a description of the ways in which the evaluation results are being or will be utilized to improve the core curriculum at the institution” (TAC 19 §4.30 (b)).”

Evaluation of the core curriculum should be an ongoing process with dual purposes:

1. To determine to what extent graduates of Texas A&M University-Texarkana (A&M-Texarkana) have mastered the EEOs embedded in the core curriculum; and
2. To provide data as feedback in refining alignment among the written curriculum (EEOs and student learning outcomes--SLOs), the taught curriculum (instruction), and the assessed curriculum.

The following link is the Texas Administrative Code website which provides additional requirements for the evaluation of the core curriculum.

[*Criteria for Evaluation of Core Curricula*](#)

PROCESS

The A&M-Texarkana core curriculum will be assessed on a two-year rotating schedule as indicated in *Appendix B*.

Ideally, assessment of the core curriculum is imbedded within the instructional process and inculcated into the continuous improvement culture of the university by providing data as feedback for decision making. The typical cycle for assessment incorporates “Plan, Do, Study, Act” steps.

The first step is for academic discipline faculty to determine in which course each EEO will be taught and assessed. Some EEOs may be taught in more than one course. For example, if one EEO is taught in ENGL 1301 Composition I and also in ENGL 1302 Composition II, the academic discipline faculty that represent the Component Area will decide where the instruction and evaluation will occur. The grouping or clustering of multiple EEOs for instructional and assessment purposes is also acceptable. **(PLAN)**

The second step in the assessment of the core curriculum is for the faculty to write SLOs and align them to the EEOs. SLOs are measureable student outcomes (of the course)—what the student is expected to know or do after completion of the course. A format for writing an SLO is provided in *Appendix C*. An example of linkage between an SLO and classroom activities, experiences, assignments, etc. is provided in *Appendix D*. **(PLAN)**

The third step requires the faculty to create (1) the assessment procedure(s) to be used in measuring student mastery of the SLOs within the structure of the designated course, and (2) a quality grading scale (e.g., a rubric) to measure and define levels of mastery, including the minimum quality level for having attained “mastery” of the indicated SLO(s) (e.g., grade of 70 on a scale of 0-100; score of 3 on a quality scale of 1-4). Assessment procedures may be written (e.g., traditional examination, essay) or performance-based (e.g., oral recitation, creation of a two or three-dimensional artifact, physical performance). A sample quality grading scale is included in *Appendix E*. The core curriculum assessments should serve dual purposes in that they fulfill the requirements of the course (i.e., the student’s grade on the assessment contributes to the final course grade) and serve as the core curriculum assessment. **(PLAN)**

The fourth step is for the faculty to teach the course objectives and implement the assessment process for all course objectives, including those specifically aligned to the core curriculum EEOs. **(DO)**

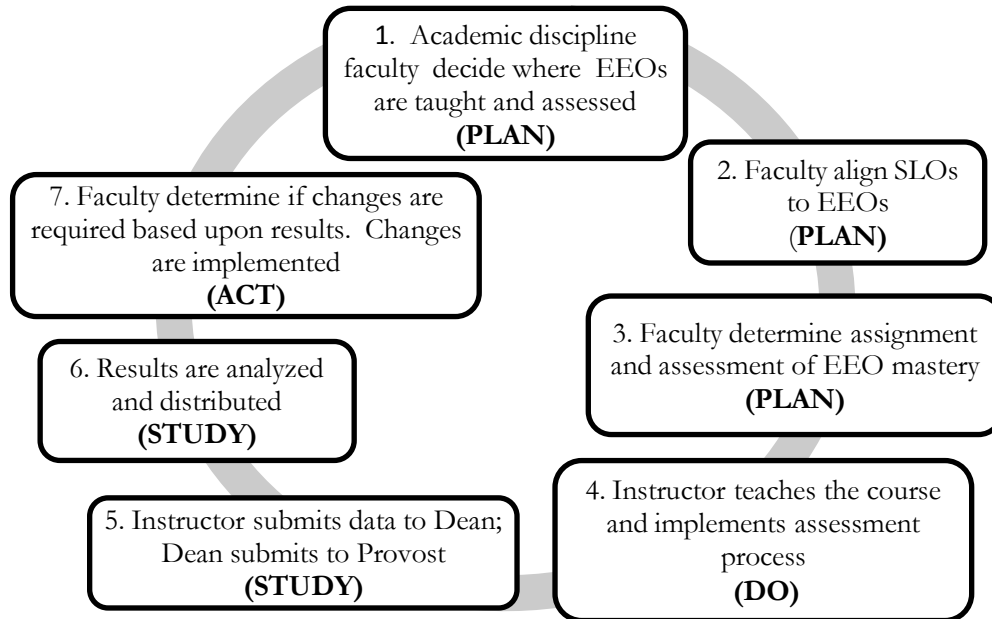
At the end of a semester, the faculty will submit electronic or hard copies of all the core curriculum student assessments and related quality grading scales for each student enrolled in the course to the Dean or designee (e.g., program coordinator) for inter-rater reliability check. The Dean will submit copies of the quality grading scales for all students to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs’s (VPAA) office for data analysis. The Dean will maintain a 20 percent sampling of student assessments for future audit or accreditation documentation. **(STUDY)**

Once VPAA office personnel have analyzed the data, reports will be generated and submitted to each Dean, who will forward to the respective faculty for review. Reports will include, at a minimum, the percentage of students who demonstrated mastery (as determined by the assessment procedures) for each EEO assessed. **(STUDY)**

The academic discipline faculty will document if changes are required based upon data received and if so, what changes (e.g., to the written, taught, and/or assessed curriculum) are warranted. These changes serve as the starting point for the next round of

assessment. Once the changes are identified and determined, then the changes should be implemented. (*ACT*)

The graphic below illustrates the assessment process cycle. One step informs the next, with the final step closing the assessment loop.



Appendix A

Texas A&M University-Texarkana Core Curriculum

Component Area	Code	Core Curriculum
Communication	10	ENGL 1301 Composition I (<i>3sch</i>) ENGL 1302 Composition II (<i>3sch</i>)
	11	SPCH 1315 Public Speaking (<i>3sch</i>)
Mathematics	20	MATH 1314 College Algebra (<i>3sch</i>) MATH 1324 Mathematics for Business & Social Sciences I (<i>3sch</i>) MATH 2313 Calculus I (or higher) (<i>3sch</i>)
Natural Sciences	30	BIOL 1306 Biology I (<i>3sch</i>) BIOL 1307 Biology II (<i>3sch</i>) CHEM 1311 General Chemistry I (<i>3sch</i>) CHEM 1312 General Chemistry II (<i>3sch</i>) PHYS 1301 College Physics I (<i>3sch</i>) PHYS 1302 College Physics II (<i>3sch</i>) PHYS 2325 University Physics I (<i>3sch</i>) PHYS 2326 University Physics II (<i>3 sch</i>)
Humanities	40	ENGL 2332 World Literature I (<i>3 sch</i>) ENGL 2341 Forms of Literature (<i>3sch</i>)
Visual and Performing Arts	50	MUSI 1306 Music Appreciation (<i>3sch</i>) ARTS 1301 Art Appreciation (<i>3sch</i>) DRAM 1310 Intro. to Theater (<i>3sch</i>)
Social & Behavioral Sciences (<i>history</i>)	60	HIST 1301 United States History I (<i>3sch</i>) HIST 1302 United States History II (<i>3sch</i>)
Social & Behavioral Sciences (<i>political science</i>)	70	GOVT 2305 Federal Government (<i>3sch</i>) GOVT 2306 Texas Government (<i>3sch</i>)
Social & Behavioral Sciences	80	PSYC 2301 General Psychology (<i>3sch</i>) PSYC 2308 Child Psychology (<i>3 sch</i>) ECON 2301 Prin. of Macroeconomics (<i>3sch</i>) GEOG 1303 World Regional Geography (<i>3sch</i>) SOCI 1301 Introductory Sociology (<i>3ch</i>) SOCI 2319 Minority Studies I (<i>3sch</i>)
Institutionally Designated Option	90	LEAD 1101 Foundations for Leadership (<i>1sch</i>) LEAD 1201 Student Leadership Challenge (<i>2sch</i>)

Appendix B

Texas A&M University-Texarkana Core Curriculum Assessment Schedule

Component Area	Code	Core Curriculum	Spring (Odd)	Fall (Odd)	Spring (Even)	Fall (Even)
Communication	10	ENGL 1301 Composition I (3sch)	X			
		ENGL 1302 Composition II (3sch)	X			
	11	SPCH 1315 Public Speaking (3sch)	X			
Mathematics	20	MATH 1314 College Algebra (3sch)		X		
		MATH 1324 Mathematics for Business & Social Sciences I (3sch)		X		
		MATH 2313 Calculus I (or higher) (3sch)		X		
Natural Sciences	30	BIOL 1306 Biology I (3sch)				X
		BIOL 1307 Biology II (3sch)			X	
		CHEM 1311 General Chemistry I (3sch)				X
		CHEM 1312 General Chemistry II (3sch)			X	
		PHYS 1301 College Physics I (3sch)				X
		PHYS 1302 College Physics II (3sch)			X	
		PHYS 2325 University Physics I (3sch)			X	
		PHYS 2326 University Physics II (3sch)				
Humanities	40	ENGL 2332 World Literature I (3sch)		X		
		ENGL 2341 Forms of Literature (3sch)		X		
Visual and Performing Arts	50	MUSI 1306 Music Appreciation (3sch)				X
		ARTS 1301 Art Appreciation (3sch)				X
		DRAM 1310 Intro. to Theater (3sch)				X
Social & Behavioral Sciences (history)	60	HIST 1301 United States History I (3sch)			X	
		HIST 1302 United States History II (3sch)			X	
Social & Behavioral Sciences (poli-sci)	70	GOVT 2305 Federal Government (3sch)	X			
		GOVT 2306 Texas Government (3sch)	X			
Social & Behavioral Sciences	80	PSYC 2301 General Psychology (3sch)		X		
		PSYC 2308 Child Psychology (3sch)		X		
		ECON 2301 Prin. of Macroeconomics (3sch)		X		
		GEOG 1303 World Reg Geography (3sch)		X		
		SOCI 1301 Introductory Sociology (3sch)		X		
		SOCI 2319 Minority Studies I (3sch)		X		
Institutionally Designated Option	90	LEAD 1101 Foundations for Leadership (1sch)	X			
		LEAD 1201 Student Leadership Challenge (2sch)	X			

Appendix C

Format for Writing Student Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes (SLOs) are statements that specify what learners will know or do as a result of a learning activity expressed as knowledge, skills, or attitudes. Components 2-4 comprise the required elements of SLOs for individual students and should be posted in the syllabus. Components 5 and 6 are incorporated within the quality grading scale that the instructor uses to determine student mastery, but is not required in the syllabus. Component 1 is added at the course/program evaluation level for the purpose of assessing entire class mastery of a specific student learning outcome.

“By the end of the course. . . (implied)

1. _____ of
- 70%
 - 80%
 - 90%

2. **WHO?** _____ The student(s)

3. **WILL . . .** _____

- Analyze
- Distinguish
- Compare/contrast
- Solve
- Perform
- Evaluate

(Verb must be measureable and match level of critical thinking desired.)

4. **WHAT?** _____

- the effects of the American Civil War
- between ineffective and effective teaching strategies
- the similarities and differences of viruses and infections
- an algebraic equation with two unknowns
- a creative dance
- the effects of immoral conduct on the outcome of political elections

5. **AS MEASURED/DEMONSTRATED BY . . .** _____

- Earning 70% accuracy
- Earning 5 out of 7 possible points
- Correctly answering 3 out of 4 questions
- Earning a score of 4 on a rubric scale of 1-6

6. **HOW? On...** _____ “

- a written examination
- an essay
- a performance
- an oral presentation

Sample SLO:

The student will analyze the effects of the American Civil War on society.

NOT a sample SLO

The student will appreciate the great art of the world.

*What is meant by ‘appreciate’?

*What is meant by ‘great art of the world’?

Appendix D
Linking Assignments to Course Objectives

Course (Prefix, Number, Title): HIST 1301 American History					
Objectives (Will...What...)	Specific Skills, Values, Attitudes	Experiences	Assignments (How...)	Standards (As Measured By)	Outcomes & Criteria (Using)
What should student be able to do?	What will the students need to know to be successful?	What experiences will lead them to develop these abilities? (What will <i>instructor</i> do/provide?)	Through what specific activities will students gain these experiences? (What will <i>student</i> do?)	How well and at what level should they be able to demonstrate the ability?	How will you/student know he/she can actually do it to that level?
<u>Describe</u> <u>Objective #1:</u> Analyze the effects of the American Civil War on society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the components (North/South) of the American Civil War • Identify the causes of the American Civil War • Compare and contrast the differing views of the American Civil War • Research primary and secondary sources to support the effects • Use APA style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read chapters 3-6 in text • Listen to lecture • Watch video • Group (in class) discussion/debate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a critical essay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn score of at least 70% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluated with criteria on the grammar/writing rubric included in syllabus • Rubric to include criteria of grammar, content, APA use, etc.

Appendix E
Sample Quality Grading Scale: ENGL 1301 Composition I

General scoring for evaluation of Papers I-VI

In addition to the requirements listed below, Papers IV and V must meet the additional requirements of (1) appropriate and correct use of sources, (2) adequate number of sources, and (3) MLA citation and documentation.

“A” papers: 90-100% of points awarded

The essay:

1. Contains a clear thesis that is maintained and presented in an organized manner and supported throughout the paper
2. Contains an effective introduction that attracts the interest of the reader, followed by a logical development of topic, and concluded with an appropriate closing
3. Maintains coherence with the use of transitional words, phrases and sentences to show the relationships of ideas
4. Contains unified paragraphs
5. Offers specifics and critical analysis, and evaluates the significance of supporting details or examples
6. Reveals a writing style that adheres to the conventions of edited American English
7. Reveals a writing style that evinces the writer’s use of stylistic techniques that enhance the paper’s effectiveness
8. Shows creative or original approach toward topic

“B” papers: 80-89% of points awarded

The essay:

Contains 1-6 as listed above

“C” papers: 70-79% of points awarded (REQUIRED FOR DEMONSTRATION OF MASTERY)

The essay:

Contains 1-4 as listed above. The paper may reveal minor errors in adhering to the conventions of edited American English, but these problems are not so severe that they inhibit the writer’s ability to be effective or to achieve clarity.

“D” papers: 60-69% of points awarded

The essay:

1. Contains a thesis, but the thesis lacks acceptable clarity and/or development
2. Lacks effective organization and appropriate use of supporting details
3. Lacks clear organization
4. Reveals some major problems in composition at the sentence level i.e., fragments, comma splices, run-on sentences
5. Lacks acceptable adherence to the conventions of edited American English

“F” papers: 59% or less of points awarded

The essay

1. Lacks a discernable thesis

2. Reveals problems in coherence and clarity
3. Lacks a sense of organization and contains little or no supporting details
4. Contains major problems at the sentence level: i.e. fragments, comma splices, run-on sentences
5. Lacks acceptable adherence to the conventions of edited American English

ADDENDUM
to
Texas A&M University-Texarkana
Assessment Plan: General Education
(for use in Fall 2011-Fall 2013)

To begin the assessment process, each College Dean will lead his/her respective faculty in preparation for their Component Area to be evaluated. *Appendix B* of the General Education Assessment Plan provides the assessment schedule.

During fall 2011, the component areas of Natural Sciences (BIOL 1307, CHEM 1312, PHYS 1302, and PHYS 2325) and Social and Behavioral Sciences (*history*) (HIST 1301 and HIST 1302) will begin the planning process with the expectation of institutional evaluation during the spring 2012 semester.

During spring 2012, the component areas of Natural Sciences (BIOL 1306, CHEM 1311, PHYS 1301, and PHYS 2326) and Visual and Performing Arts (MUSI 1306, ARTS 1301, and DRAM 1310) will begin the planning process with the expectation of institutional evaluation during the fall 2012 semester.

During fall 2012, the component areas of Communication (ENGL 1301, ENGL 1302, and SPCH 1315), Social and Behavioral Sciences (GOVT 2305 and GOVT 2306), and the Institutionally Designated Option (LEAD 1101 and LEAD 1201) will begin the planning process with the expectation of institutional evaluation during the spring 2013.

During spring 2012, the component areas of Mathematics (MATH 1314, MATH 1324, and MATH 2313), Humanities (ENGL 2332 and ENGL 2341), and Social and Behavioral Sciences (PSYC 2301, PSYC 2308, ECON 2301, GEOG 1303, SOCI 1301, and SOCI 2319) will begin the planning process with the expectation of institutional evaluation during the fall 2013.

During fall 2013, the sequence begins again for the second institutional evaluation cycle.

Table 1 provides general timelines for the first full cycle of institutional evaluation of the core curriculum. Status updates regarding the progress of the general education assessment will be presented at each Provost's Council meeting.

Table 1

**Timeline for Institutional Evaluation of the Core Curriculum
Initial Cycle: Fall 2011-Spring 2013**

Month		Task
Fall (2011 & 2012)	Spring (2012 & 2013)	
August	January	Faculty awareness of EEOs to be assessed
September	February	SLOs are written in measurable terms SLOs align with the EEOs to be assessed
October	March	Faculty identify both assignment and assessment of SLO Faculty created the assessment procedure(s) and quality grading schedule/scale (e.g., rubric)
November	April	Revise and refine as needed
Dec 1	May 1	Quality grading schedules/scales (e.g., rubrics) due to Provost's Office
January-April	August-November	Faculty teach curriculum and assess EEOs
May 1	Dec 1	Faculty review documents; conduct inter-rater reliability checks as appropriate; submit documents to Dean
3 rd Monday in May	3 rd Monday in Dec	Dean submits the quality grading schedule/scale for each student participating in the core curriculum assessment to Provost's Office
3 rd Monday in June	3 rd Monday in Jan	Provost's Office disseminates report to Dean; Dean forwards to Faculty who review and make necessary changes in process